

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRN, ESCAP, CE

SUBJECT: RED:ESCAP:PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH SHIPPING COMMITTEE

REF: STATE 47253

1. SUMMARY: ESCAP 31ST SESSION COULD ONLY AGREE POSTPONE DECISION ON CREATION OF SHIPPING COMMITTEE UNTIL NEXT SESSION. MEANWHILE, STATUS QUO ON ESCAP ADMINISTRATION OF SHIPPING MATTERS CONTINUES. RED RECOMMENDS WASHINGTON RESTUDY US POSITION ON THIS ISSUE DURING NEXT SIX MONTHS. END SUMMARY.

2. AFTER EXTENDED DEBATE UNTIL 0300 MARCH 6, AGREEMENT FINALLY REACHED ON SHIPPING RESOLUTION SPONSORED BY SRI LANKA. OPERATIVE PARAGRAPH FOLLOWS:

3. ESCAP "DECIDES THERE SHALL IN PRINCIPLE BE ONE FORUM FOR SHIPPING AND PORTS; FURTHER DECIDES THAT DECISION ON ESTABLISHMENT OF FORUM SHALL BE TAKEN AT THIRTY-SECOND COMMISSION SESSION; IN MEANTIME INVITES EXECUTIVE SECRETARY TO TAKE NECESSARY MEASURES UNDER HIS GUIDANCE FOR BETTER COORDINATION ALL MATTERS RELATING TO SHIPPING AND PORTS."

4. IN OTHER WORDS, SRI LANKA LOST AGAIN DESPITE ISSUING NUMEROUS
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AIDE MEMOIRES ON SHIPPING COMMITTEE DURING PAST YEAR. ACTIVE

INTERVENTION OF SRI LANKA DEPUTY HIGH COMMISSIONER JAYAKODDY COULD NOT OVERCOME STRONG OPPOSITION OF INDONESIA AND MALAYSIA BACKED BY HONG KONG ALTHOUGH SRI LANKA ALSO HAD SUPPORT OF INDIA, PAKISTAN, BANGLADESH, IRAN, USSR, CHINA, NEPAL, BHUTAN, AFGHANISTAN AND MONGOLIA. USDEL INDICATED OPPOSITION TO SHIPPING COMMITTEE EARLY IN DISCUSSION AT COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE BUT REMAINED SILENT DURING FINAL LATE NIGHT DEBATE. (CERTAIN ASEAN COUNTRIES LATER EXPRESSED APPRECIATION.)

5. STATUS QUO ON ESCAP SHIPPING MATTERS WILL CONTINUE UNTIL NEXT SESSION AT JAKARTA WITHOUT ANY GUARANTEE AGREEMENT ON NEW SHIPPING COMMITTEE POSSIBLE EVEN THEN. SURPRISINGLY, DEBATE INDICATED FOR FIRST TIME JAPAN, UK AND AUSTRALIA FAVORED PUTTING ALL ESCAP SHIPPING RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE INSTEAD OF TRADE COMMITTEE AS RECOMMENDED BY EXPERT GROUP OF SHIPPING. RED EXPECTS ISSUE WILL BE DISCUSSED INTERMITTENTLY DURING COMING YEAR AT MEETINGS OF ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES (ACPR) WITH SRI LANKA ALTERNATING WITH INDIA TO REMIND ESCAP MEMBERS OF CONTINUING NEED FOR SEPARATE SHIPPING COMMITTEE.

6. RECOMMENDATION: RED RECOMMENDS DURING NEXT FEW MONTHS WASHINGTON RESTUDY VARIOUS US ALTERNATIVE POSITIONS SUCH AS:
1. SUPPORTING NEW SHIPPING COMMITTEE, 2A. NO SHIPPING COMMITTEE BUT PLACING ALL SHIPPING MATTERS IN TRADE COMMITTEE, 2B. PLACING ALL SHIPPING IN TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE, AND 3. STATUS QUO. FROM DEBATE AT LATEST ESCAP SESSION, RED IS INCLINED TO FAVOR 2B ABOVE ON TRIAL BASIS FOR 2 YEARS WITH OPTION TO SUPPORT NEW SHIPPING COMMITTEE IF PERFORMANCE BY TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE UNSATISFACTORY. FINAL US POSITION NEEDED BY NOVEMBER 1975 WHEN BOTH TRADE AND TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEES MEET.
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